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Chicago mayoral runoff: Choice between progress or racial division

By John Bachtell

The Chicago mayoral race heads to an April 4 runoff between Cook County Commissioner and former Chicago Teachers Union leader Brandon Johnson and former Chicago Public Schools (CPS) CEO Paul Vallas. The contest offers voters a clear choice between two different visions for the city. One is of a people centered equitable democratic city and the other is one of going back to the days of machine control and racial division.

Nine candidates made up the crowded field. With most of the vote in, Vallas leads with 35%, followed by Johnson at 20%. They head to a runoff because no candidate received over 50% of the vote.

Vallas won with a campaign focused solely on crime, calling for diverting more funding to hiring officers and locking people up. As the only white candidate, he employed dog whistles that appealed to racial fears.

Vallas has the backing of the corporate elite, real estate interests, the fascistic Fraternal Order of Police, right-wing elements, and Republicans, including failed GOP MAGA candidate for governor, Darren Bailey.

Vallas ran a slick media campaign that reinvented him from an anti-abortion supporter and public official who has failed at every level to a leader who will solve the city's deep problems. When he was CEO of the Chicago Public Schools, Vallas led

the Chicago school privatization and shutdown efforts which deepened the school crisis. He led the privatization of New Orleans public schools after Hurricane Katrina, and made a mess of schools in Philadelphia and Bridgeport, Conn.

Johnson, whose father was a public worker, AFSCME member and pastor, grew up in Chicago's Austin neighborhood, an African American working-class community on the West Side. He was a middle school public school teacher, rank-and-file CTU



NEW HAVEN

Tonya Ricks performs Lift Every Voice and Sing at overflow 49th People's World Black History event with panel, student competition prizes, drumming, dance and poetry. CT Story P 4

activist, and organizer elected to the Cook County Commission in 2019.

Johnson built an energetic, intergenerational, multi-racial coalition and movement with a superior campaign operation and message. Crucial activist unions backed Johnson's grassroots campaign,

Lori Lightfoot defeated, Paul Vallas and Brandon Johnson in a runoff on April 4.

like CTU and SEIU Local 73, and their massive resources and potent political operations enabled the movement to go citywide.

The victory is the result of 10 years of movement building and electoral activism by the CTU after progressives won the leadership in the union. The CTU built alliances with community groups and activists through the United Working Families Party. In addition to the UWFP, the campaign won the backing of eight alderpersons, many ward organizations, and DSA chapters. Young voters also powered the campaign which was allied with the citywide movement for police reform and the historic election of police district councils.

Johnson's campaign and Chicago's labor and social justice movement have an enormous challenge to unite a city historically fractured along racial lines. The campaign must present a unifying, all-inclusive, equitable vision for a modern city and build a campaign that goes well beyond the coalition that got him in the runoff. That includes building support

in every community.

Vallas and the corporate media immediately branded Johnson a threat to the city, defining him as a wild-eyed radical socialist, a pawn of the CTU that wants to take over the city, and committed to defunding the police and massively raising taxes to fund his utopian and unrealistic agenda. Vallas will inundate the political space with this message.

Johnson calls for massive investments in historically disinvested working-class communities, building up mental health, social workers, and other social services that have fallen on the police department, fully funding public education, and investing in affordable housing and public transit.

His approach to public safety sees a correlation between youth unemployment and violence, in addition to widespread availability of firearms and drug trafficking. His program calls for investment in youth jobs and training, full funding of public schools, and front-line services like counselors and social workers to deal with community trauma.

People's World on the front line battling right-wing thought control

By Chauncey K. Robinson

There is a war being waged against truth and legitimate information in our country. The far-right wants to obscure real history, making it something that caters to values that fly in the face of inclusivity, progress, and diversity. These culture wars not only push bigoted rhetoric but are used as a tool to distract from the detrimental legislation the Republican Party and its supporters are trying to force upon working people.

When the corporate press reports on these happenings, it does so in a way that often tries to legitimize these fascist-like tactics while downplaying the real dangers to democracy and the future of the United States.

While GOP politicians push a narrative that the "woke mob" and "the left" are trying to indoctrinate the youth, the reality is that the main indoctrination afoot is that being carried out by the right-wing media, which wants you to believe that the only salvation to the societal ills of poverty, low-wages, and hardship lies in trusting billionaires and the politicians in their pockets.

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People's World has stayed on the topic of climate change, refusing to fall into the trap of placing all the burden on working people. Rather, we strive to hold corporate greed accountable for decisions that put people, animals, and the land in constant danger.

The publication also continues to highlight the dangers of white supremacist rhetoric that has emboldened extreme right-wing domestic terrorism.

If you enjoy and value coverage you can trust and count on, please consider making a donation to People's World today.

This country needs journalism that's not beholden to billionaire interests—journalism that stands in the way of right-wing extremism, misinformation, and the erasure of history. Please consider helping us continue this journey.

There is a war underway in this country—a war on truth.

Pennsylvania's method of funding schools ruled unconstitutional



By Rosita Johnson

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The publication also continues to highlight the dangers of white supremacist rhetoric that has emboldened extreme right-wing domestic terrorism. These are just a few examples of the issues People's World has focused on in order to give thorough analysis and information in the interests of working people.

In order to keep reporting on the things that matter most, the paper needs the financial support of its readers.

If you enjoy and value coverage you can trust and count on, please consider making a donation to People's World today.

People's World is part of a long legacy of working-class journalism that began with our founding as the Daily Worker in 1924. In order to keep building on that legacy, we have to raise \$125,000 in our Spring Fund Drive to keep doing this important work.

Please consider helping us continue this journey.

Court ruling is a landmark victory for the people of the state and their children.

CONNECTICUT NEWS

United Front Says: Housing Is a Human Right!

A united front is mobilizing around the powerful idea that housing is a human right. For over twenty hours testifying before the state legislature's Housing Committee, a diverse outpouring of tenants and allies demanded limits on a corporate landlord's unchecked power to increase rents and gut communities with profit-driven evictions.

Cap The Rent CT, a coalition of over 50 organizations including tenant unions, labor unions, housing rights and legal aid organizations, community, faith, socialist and student groups testified that rent increases are not fair and are harming the working class.

One mother from Meriden, Anabel Hernández, told about the eviction violence she experienced after falling behind on her landlord's aggressive rent increase. Speaking in Spanish with translation she said, "Un día a las 8:00 am llegó el marshals y sacó todo a la calle, yo cargué solo a mis hijos." ("One day at 8:00 am the marshal threw my things onto the street, I only carried my children.") She said working class mothers demand caps on rent because: "La vivienda digna es nuestro derecho." ("Dignified housing is our right.")

Connecticut AFL-CIO president Ed Hawthorne said union members are burdened with 30% to 40% rent increases in just the last two years calling for rent caps to protect working people from homelessness.

Representing the Connecticut Communist Party, Mariano Rivera said people in his community are being driven into unprecedented levels of homelessness, including 25% childhood homelessness, because of the drive of landlords to extract value from the productive members of society. Saying housing as a human right, he warned of the growing crisis of financial investors acquiring mobile home parks from independent owners generating massive profits at the expense of low income and disabled park residents

Outnumbered by tenants five to one, corporate landlords provided fear-based testimony that a cap on rent increases would, somehow, cause rents to increase. Working class tenants demanded a rent cap of 2.5%.

In a public poll last month, over 72% of people in Connecticut supported a cap on rents. Struggling to survive, many are tired of paying for the landlord's privilege and profit.

There is recognition that the dangerous housing crisis caused by landlord speculation and barbarism needs to be addressed through organized and direct community action.

The movement to build safe, healthy, peaceful communities says: Housing is a Human Right!

People's World en primera línea luchando contra el control del pensamiento de la derecha

By .Chauncey K. Robinson

Se está librando una guerra contra la verdad y la información legítima en nuestro país. La extrema derecha quiere oscurecer la historia real, convirtiéndola en algo que satisfaga los valores que van en contra de la inclusión, el progreso y la diversidad. Estas guerras culturales no solo promueven una retórica intolerante, sino que se utilizan como una herramienta para distraer la atención de la legislación perjudicial que el Partido Republicano y quienes lo apoyan están tratando de imponer a los trabajadores.

Cuando la prensa corporativa informa sobre estos acontecimientos, lo hace de una manera que a menudo trata de legitimar estas tácticas fascistas mientras minimiza los peligros reales para la democracia y el futuro de los Estados Unidos.

Si bien los políticos republicanos impulsan una narrativa de que la "mafia despierta" y "la izquierda" están tratando de adoctrinar a la juventud, la realidad es que el principal adoctrinamiento en marcha es el que llevan a cabo los medios de comunicación de derecha, que quieren que creas que la única salvación para los males sociales de la pobreza, los bajos salarios y las dificultades radica en confiar en los multimillonarios y los políticos en sus bolsillos.

En People's World, nos enfocamos en un camino diferente a seguir: el camino a seguir de las personas. Uno que reconozca el poder de la clase trabajadora, que incluya nuestras luchas y triunfos.

Escribimos artículos centrados en lectores como usted, que se esfuerzan todos los días por un mañana mejor al participar en las luchas del presente.

Esto incluye temas como mejores salarios, seguridad y educación.

¿Nos ayudas a seguir señalando el camino a seguir? Haga una donación para asegurarse de que People's World pueda alcanzar su meta de \$125,000 para la recaudación de fondos de primavera de 2023.

People's World se ha mantenido en el tema del cambio climático, negándose a caer en la trampa de poner toda la carga sobre los trabajadores. Más bien, nos esforzamos por responsabilizar a la codicia corporativa por las decisiones que ponen en peligro constante a las personas, los animales y la tierra.

La publicación también continúa destacando los peligros de la retórica de la supremacía blanca que ha envalentonado el terrorismo interno de extrema derecha.

Si disfruta y valora la cobertura en la que puede confiar, considere hacer una donación a People's World hoy.

People's World es parte de un largo legado del periodismo de la clase trabajadora que comenzó con nuestra fundación como Daily Worker en 1924. Para seguir construyendo sobre ese legado, tenemos que recaudar \$125,000 en nuestra Spring Fund Drive para seguir haciendo este importante trabajo.

Este país necesita un periodismo que no esté sujeto a los intereses multimillonarios, un periodismo que se interponga en el camino del extremismo de derecha, la desinformación y el borrado de la historia. Por favor considere ayudarnos a continuar este viaje.

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